EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2003

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to introduce the Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act.

The purpose of this bill is to ensure that the new Department of Homeland Security is subject to the same financial management and accountability requirements as all other cabinet-level departments. This requires adding the new Department to the list of agencies that are covered by the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990 and making adjustments to provisions of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to make it consistent with the CFO Act. These changes will put the Department's CFO on the same footing as the CFOs at the rest of the cabinet-level departments by ensuring that the Department's CFO is a presidential appointee subject to Senate confirmation, that the CFO reports directly to the Secretary, and that the CFO is a part of the statutorily created CFO Council.

The CFO Act of 1990 increased federal accountability by enacting much needed financial management reforms. Among the most important of these reforms was the establishment of a new leadership structure for federal financial management within the 24 largest departments and agencies as well as within the Office of Management and Budget. The CFO Act created 24 chief financial officers for the major executive departments and agencies as well as 24 deputy CFOs. The CFOs in the 14 cabinet-level departments, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are filled by presidential appointees, confirmed by the Senate. These CFOs serve as the leaders of financial management in these departments and agencies. The Department of Homeland Security, as one of our most important departments, should be in this framework.

The newly created Department of Homeland Security is one of the most significant government reorganizations in the history of the United States. The Department faces the challenge of merging 22 agencies, 17,000 employees, and hundreds of computer systems and management processes. As the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management, I have seen how ineffective strategic planning can result in systemic problems in an agency's financial management. The Department of Defense is a good example of a situation where years of insufficient coordination among business units, improper financial planning, and the use of stove piped information systems has resulted in the inability of the Department to obtain a clean annual financial audit or fully account for the way it spends its budget. No one wishes to see these same mistakes made at the Department of Homeland Security. That is why it is extremely important to instill solid financial management practices in the Department from its inception through the establishment of a strong CFO that is on an equal footing with the other CFOs at cabinet-level departments.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Homeland Security Financial Accountability Act makes important, common sense changes to the CFO position at the Department of Homeland Security. It is a good government measure that benefits the American taxpayer. I urge my colleagues to join with me in seeking prompt enactment of the bill.

WELL DONE, SPECTRUM

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN
OF WISCONSIN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2003

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the accomplishments of the SBC/Ameritech employee group SPECTRUM, which holds its annual dinner August 3 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

SPECTRUM has been successful in achieving its goals to provide a supportive, diverse, accepting, and respectful work environment for all employees regardless of sexual orientation. Their work both within and outside of their company has served to improve the perception of SBC within the LGBT community and the community as a whole. SPECTRUM has successfully been able to secure company benefits for domestic partnerships. The group should be commended for its perseverance and ability to work with SBC to come closer to achieving SBC's Diversity Vision.

SPECTRUM has done a fine job of celebrating diversity as well as ensuring that rights and benefits in the workplace are applied equally and without discrimination. Groups that promote diversity and equal rights in the workplace are an important part of promoting tolerance and awareness. Organizations such as SPECTRUM have gone to great lengths to secure equal and fair treatment of employees through equal benefits and fair opportunities regardless of factors such as sexual orientation. Although much more work still needs to be done, SPECTRUM has led the way by working with SBC and its employees to set a wonderful example of what should be accomplished in all workplaces and throughout the entire United States.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KIND
OF WISCONSIN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2003

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday July 23, 2003 I was unable to record my vote on final passage of H.R. 2800, the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill for FY04, and the four recorded votes on amendments immediately preceding. My unfortunate and unavoidable absence was due to the fact that I fell very ill earlier in the evening.

Had I been able to vote I would have voted the following: Rollcall No. 425: "yes," Rollcall No. 426: "yes," Rollcall No. 427: "no," Rollcall No. 428: "yes," and Rollcall No. 429: "yes."

REGARDING TURKEY'S INVASION OF CYPRUS 29 YEARS AGO

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, twenty-nine years ago—on July 20, 1974—the Republic of Turkey invaded the independent Republic of Cyprus and seized control of more than one third of the island. In 1983, Turkey declared the seized territory to be the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus." For two decades this entity has received diplomatic recognition only from its creator and protector the Republic of Turkey. United Nations observers are deployed, and the 113-mile barbed wire fence known as the "Green Line" continues to divide the island.

The United States has supported efforts by the United Nations to address the continued division. Though not accepted by both sides, the latest plan, the Annan Plan, remains on the table for consideration. Both Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders have met trying to resolve their differences on this issue.

Over the last several years, the Helsinki Commission, which I chair, has held two briefings focusing on Cyprus. We have heard optimism from some witnesses, and skepticism from others. But the common thread throughout the testimonies has been that Cyprus has been divided too long and must come together to move into the future.

In April, the Green Line was opened to private individuals and groups and their automobiles, and Cypriots flocked across by the thousands into areas denied them for over a generation. Although required to return home each day, families have been able to visit their pre-war homes. In an effort to develop trade between the two areas, the Government of Cyprus announced in June that it would permit Turkish Cypriot trucks carrying goods from the north to cross into the south. The trucks are inspected in accordance with European Union regulations and the laws of the Government of Cyprus Transport Department, which will issue permits to the drivers for the transport of goods, and various fees have been reduced or abolished.

Thus, while we observe the anniversary of a bleak day in the history of Cyprus, we do so in the light of optimism. The people of Cyprus have made clear their desire to overcome the legacy of the past and move toward some